CHRISTMAS.

In order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, says Mr. Joseph Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes of the People of England," it is absolutely necessary to investigate the amusements most generally prevalent among them. Porson used to say that a single Athenian newspaper would be worth all the Commentaries on Aristophanes, revealing to us as it would the faily di-versions and social habits of the Attic metropolis. The games and pastimes of a country afford us, in fact, a measuring unit by which we can gauge the whole civilization and social development of the people. It was a favorite saving of Bacon's that from one portion of human knowledge you can infer all the rest, and that one fact involves all other facts; and such indeed is the nice adjustment of old Father Time's loom and shuttles that the web he weaves is always uniform in its tissue. As in history, which Shelley calls "the web of human things," so in Nature there is this same correlation between the great and the small in her vast frame, which enables us to trace and infer the one from our knowledge of the other; insomuch that the capillary attraction which draws from the earth the moisture that supports vegetable life, and which diffuses the quickening sap through the furthest branch and the topmost twig, is just as great as it is, and no greater, in order to overcome the force of gravitation in the earth. The old Platonic dogma which taught the "immanence of All in Each" is true in the highest and the widest sense. To speak à la Emerson, every thing in nature and in history sub tends the same angle, so that given one of its sides, we can then define the entire figure. In plain English, and to descead from the general to the particular, given the amusements of a people, we can furnish a so-lution of the entire status of that people, almost as exactly as Agassiz can delineate the entire structure and aquatic habits of a fish, given one of his scales. You can best understand the Grecians at the Olympie games and the Theatre of Bacchus: the Romans in the Campus Martius, along the Via Sacra on a holyday Triumph, and, at a later period, in the ned at jousts and tournaments and "courts of love."

The history of the English race, as our readers know, derives some of its most pictorial pages from the sports and pastimes which have characterized its various epochs. In the earliest times of which we are informed, we find our "rude forefathers" especially addicted to "the crafte of huntynge," to which was subsequently added the sport of hawking. Sir Thomas More, who wrote in the reign of Henry VIII, describes it as being the chief delight of manhood, "even unto his daye,"

To hunt and hawke, to nourish up and fede The greyhounde to the course, and the hawke to th' flight, And to bestryde a good and lusty stede.

Archery, we need not say, was an art in which the English excelled all their rivals, and how effective ancestors during the 17th century may be culled from the quaint old pages of Burton in his "Anatomy of Melancholy." Ringing, bowling, shooting, playing with keel-pins, tronks, coits, pitching of bars, hurling, wrestling, leaping, running, fencing, mustering, swimming, playing with wasters, foils, footballs, balowns, running at the quintain, and the like, he describes as the common recreations of country folks: "riding of great horses, running at and aerial creations of a romantic fancy, or because rings, tilts and tournaments, horse-races, and wild- it has dispelled the wonders of a wonder-loving age. goose chases," he considers "disports of greater Still it may be permitted us to doubt whether the men, which though good in themselves yet many habit of seeking a scientific explication of every gentlemen by such means do gallop quite out of phenomenon in nature and history may not be intheir fortunes." Dancing, singing, masking, mumming, and stage plays, he thinks, "are reasonable can ill afford to lose. If there be any sentiment recreations, if in season, as are May-games, wakes, which is adapted more than another to chill the tides Let the common people, he concludes, "freely feast, sing, dance, have puppet shows, hobby-horses, tabers, and crowds*; let them play at ball and barley-brakes; let them have jesters, masks, gladiators, tumblers, and jugglers, lest the people do worse and Whitson-ales, if not at unreasonable hours." ments, he fears, would result in the general preva- reckoned any longer among the categories of modern

clew to the discovery of its native genius and tra- of wonders, in which every thing was wondrous. ditional history, the absence or disappearance of The mobile fancy was then quick to people all space such popular diversions is a no less significant fact. "with life and mystical predominance," and as Im-There are others among us than the mere anti- agination bodied forth "the forms of things unquarian who look with regret upon the decay of known," it was not perhaps "the poet's pen," but those numerous ancestral observances which once the youthful arder of a vivid fancy," which gave to obtained in "merrie England." At the risk of our airy nothings "a local habitation and a name." being deemed as fusty and mouldy as the little par- It is just such an experience as this that Wordsson of Bracebridge Hall, we must candidly avow worth, the poet of Nature, has described in his subthat even the old superstitions of our simple-hearted limest ode on the intimations of immortality, from forefathers have often for us a higher interest and a recollections of early childhood: deeper import than we have found in the philosophic truth which in this boastful 19th century "we have lived to learn." Fauns and sylphs and household sprites, the elves and the fairies, Oberon and Queen Mab, "live no longer in the faith of reason;" the charming race, as Schiller says, has emigrated. Even in Chaucer's time, when the early twilight of our midday had just begun to dawn, we find the elves disappearing from each sunny hill and grassy vale. It is his "Wife of Bath" who thus gnores their existence in her day :

In old dayes of the King Artour, Of which that Bretons speken gret honour, All was this lond fulfilled of faerie; The Elf-Quene with hir jolie companie Daunsed full oft in many a grene mede; This was the old opinion, as I rede. I speke of many hundred yeres agoe, But now can no man see non elves mo For now the grete charité and prayers Of limitours and other holy freres, That serchen every lond and every streme, As thik as motes in the sunne-beme— This maketh that there ben no faeries: For there as wont to walken was an elfe, Where walketh now the limitour himself

But if the tiny divinities of the Fairy Mythology have been thus exorcised by the "grete charité and prayers" of the holy orders belonging to the new religion, "the Progress" has left still further behind it the old holyday customs and the festive rites once so religiously observed; and if "limitours and other vexed by that "increase of knowledge which in holy freres" are justly chargeable with having creases sorrow". The plastic and impressible nascared away Titania and Robin-Good-Fellow, we ture of youth is thus easily encased in the callus fear the stern old Puritans must come in for the which renders it insensible to the little joys and blame [or praise?] of having brought the May-day genial impulses of an unspoiled childhood. Ambigame and Christmas eremonial into partial disrepute tious parents, having the Baconian maxim that and almost total desuctude, insomuch that they have "knowledge is power" constantly before their eyes, become "like the sherris sack of old Falstaff, mere accelerate this pre-maturing process which converts matters of speculation among commentators." It boys into little old men, by absurdly commencing to was one among the many inculpations which the educate the practical reason before the child has Roundheads brought against Charles I, that he re- any. At a time when he should be revelling in stored in the eighth year of his reign the proclamation of James I. removing all inhibitions against "lawful recreations on Sundays," such as "daunctures affluence of instruction, and listening to her thousand-tongued voice amid the objects new and "lawful recreations on Sundays," such as "daunctures which she reveals to the "fond attentive ing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whit- gaze of mute astonishment," he is instead cramped son ales, Morris daunces, the setting up of May-poles, on the forms of the school and bent double over and other sports therewith used." A violent paper books. The Imagination, which but a little while warfare was long waged in pamphlets on this sub- ago had been so radiant and exuberant, under such ject between Churchmen on one side and Puritans a regimen soon loses its elasticity and "can no more on the other, the advantage both in argument and divine," and in its stead there rises the gibbering scurrility generally resting with the latter. Thomas and squeaking puppet of a prematurely developed Hall, "Pastor of King's Norton," in a pamphlet entitled "Funchria Flora, or the Down-fall of Maygames," published 1660, thus arraigns the Goddess Flora at the bar, on the criminal charge of furnishing flowers to adorn these idolatrous May-poles: in their dotage.
"Flora, hold up thy hand; thou art here indited What wonder, moreover, that the festive honors

peace of our sovereign lord, his crown and dignity, hast bro't in a pack of practical fanatics, viz. igmaskers, mummers, May-pole stealers, healthdrinkers, gamesters, lewd-men, light women, contemners of magistrates, affronters of ministers, rebellious to masters, disobedient to parents, mis spenders of time, and abusers of the creature," &c. A cavalier poetaster, on the other hand, thus pilories the "straitlaced Puritanicals:"

" These teach that Dancing is a Jezabel, And Barley-Break the ready road to Hell The Morrice-Idols, Whitsun-ales can be But prophane reliques of a Jubilee; There is a zeal t espresse how much they do The Organs hate—have silenced Bagpipes too; And harmless May-poles all are railed upon, As if they were the tow'rs of Babylon."
[Randolph's Poems, 1646.

In the same strain, after the Restoration, is the following, quoted by Brand, from a volume bearing the ominous title of the "Welsh Levite tossed in a Blanket," London, 1691:

" I remember the blessed times when every thing in the World that was displeasing and offensive to the Brethren went under the name of horrid, abominable Popish Superstition. Organs, and May-poles, Bishop's Courts, and the Bear Garden; Surplices and Long Hair, Cathedrals and Play Houses, Set Forms and Painted Glass, Fonts and Apostle Spoons, Church Musick and Bull Baiting, Altar Rails and Rosemary on Brawn—nay, Fiddles, Whitson-ale, Pig at Bartholomew Fair, Plum Porrige, Puppet Shows, Carriers' Bells, Figures in Gingerbread, and at last Moses and Aaron, the Decalogue, the Creeds, and the Lord's Prayer were thus railed upon. A Crown, a Cross, an Angel, and a Bishop's Head, could not be endured so much as in a Sign. Our Garters, Bellows, and Warming Pans were godly Mottoes, our Bandboxes were lined with wholesome Instructions, and even our Trunks with the Assembly-men's Sayings. Ribbons were converted into Bible-Strings. Nay, in our zeal, we visited the Gardens and the Apothecary's Shops. Unquentum Apostolicum, Carduus benedictus, Angelica, St. John's Wort, and Our Lady's Thietle, were summoned before a Class and commanded to take new Names; of course, we unsainted the

What the overstrained zeal of the Puritans com menced modern refinement has finished; so that, to employ the grateful language of Irving, the traditionary customs of golden-hearted antiquity, its feudal hospitalities and lordly wassailings, have passed bloody arena of gladiatorial combatants; the very dal hospitalities and lordly wassailings, have passed "age and body" of mediæval Europe is best scan away with the baronial castles and stately manorhouses in which they were celebrated. They comported with the shadowy hall, the great oaken gal lery, and the tapestried parlor, but are unfitted for the light showy saloons and gay drawing-rooms of the modern villa. Society, he well says, has acquired a more enlightened and elegant tone; but it has lost many of its strong local peculiarities, its faith in the holyday duties and weakened the homebred feelings, its honest fireside delights. The world has become more worldly.

It is apparent that the tendency of modern civil-

ization is to educate the reason at the expense of every other faculty: the imagination meanwhile has been overlaid by "useful knowledge" and "seientific facts," until, to borrow an illustration from the exploded mythology of the elves and fairies, it has become tongue-tied, stunted, and idiotic, like the little changeling child, which "some night-tripthe crossbow became in their hands as an implement ping fairy" has left in place of the "animosus of war is sufficiently attested by the victory of Cressy. Much information as to the recreations of our stolen away from the Paphian bowers in which she was wont to disport, and is changed into a weakly and starveling elf:

"A fairy thee unweeting reft There as thou slep'st in tender swadling band, And her base ilfin brood there for thee left."

Let not the reader suppose that we intend to indulge ourselves in a homily against the progress of science because it has made havoc among the light sensibly sealing up fountains of pleasure which we of emotion at their source and freeze the natural tumblers, and jugglers, lest the people do worse have been so constantly held in check by the practi-The disuse of such entertain- cal and the philosophical, that they can hardly be lence of melancholy in "so foggie an island" as mind. Those of us who are pretty well advanced in years can revert in memory to the period when . If the sports and pastimes of a nation afford us a the world seemed to us one huge sphinx-a wonder

Heaven lies about us in our infancy ! Shades of the prison-house begin to close Upon the growing Boy, But he beholds the light, and whence it flows, He sees it in his joy; The Youth who daily farther from the East Must travel, still is Nature's Priest, And by the vision splendid Is on his way attended; At length the Man perceives it die away, And fade into the light of common day. It is pleasant to reflect that there are those among

us who can remember the time when there were boys and girls upon their earth; if it were not so we might with reason have suspected that their existence was almost as apocryphal as that of the lubber fiends and genial divinities of the old Teutonic mythology. There are no children now-a-days. The miss who has scarcely been emancipated from the nursery, speaks in the language of one who has be-eome blasse with life's joys and sorrows, and fancies that there is no longer any thing left to her worth knowing: she is afflicted with ennui because, we suppose, she has learned that the earth is hollow, and has discovered that her doll is stuffed with bran and sawdust. The young master, impatient of re-straint, self-confident and aspiring, addicts himself to "philosophy in sport," cuts open his drum to see where the noise comes from, and then whines and pines like another Solomon, whose spirit has been ture of youth is thus easily encased in the callus

* This was the old English for violins. _____ of Christmas have fallen into neglect, when geo-

by the name of Flora, of the city of Rome, in the graphic discovery and scientific research have left county of Babylon, for that thou, contrary to the nothing mysterious in the world save he source of the Nile and the name of the man ir the moon? What wonder that its hoary traditions should be norants, atheists, papists, drunkards, swearers, scouted when "Young America" is "progressing" swash-bucklers, maid-marrions, morrice-dancers, towards its "manifest destiny" in the Brobdignaggian steps of a "young giant," and with a breakneck speed that never pauses to look hek? In an age of "fast men" and faster children we must not look for the contemplative virtues of our stand-still grandsires. Theirs was the age of hosehold charities and unsophisticated sentiment. The genial currents of the soul had not yet been tught to flow in the artificial channels of a fashionale easte, nor had warm emotions been thrust into the patent freezers of convention. Society among them had its individual traits and peculiarities, its idiosyncrasies, if you please; but now-a-days it has been stretched on a Procrustes' bed, or, to change the figure, been reduced to the gregarious equality that obtains in a hogshead of black-eyed pas.

We have said that the festive hopes once rendered to Christmas have been impaired by geogra-

phical discovery and overgrown by scientific pur-suits. We wish to make clear the connexion between this effect and its causes; and, firstly, we maintain that geographical explorations have weakened the popular faith in the harmless myths con-nected with this festival. Man is ever indisposed to bring his ideal creations within the bale and precincts of his own senses. He ascribes to them a residence and an origin in scenes remote from human observation. Mark how the mythical element expands in the old Homeric Odyssey, as Ulyses wan-ders in his outward-bound voyage further and fur-ther from his island home, and low it entirely disappears on his "homeward-bound" as he approaches he shores of Ithaca. Poetic versimilitude requires that the divinities of the fable-world should make their home in some secluded haunt, where the foot of man has never trodden: they fly before he progress of civilization and forsake the hill aid dale, the forest and the mead, "paved fountain and the rushy brook," where man has come with the axe and the ploughshare. And thus it is that the old English elves and woodland sprites have been startled from their fairy-land; and thus, too, have the antique superstitions connected with what may be called the Christian mythology become as effete as the Eleusinian mysteries. Shall we lament this? Perhaps we ought not; but the question arises why has Imagination been given to man if it is not a faculty to be exercised? And if it is to be exercised, how is it to be exercised in youth, the only period in which it is vigorous, buoyant, and opulent?

Scientific study and discovery have still more powerfully hastened the eclipse of the popular popular observance of the holyday rites. The study of science has conduced to this result, because it engenders in the minds of votaries a disrelish for every thing that cannot be weighed, measured, and utilized. Scientific discovery has tended in the same direction, because it has driven the imagination from its own ground, by evoking, as with a magic wand, the wonderful realities which have transcended its highest flights. Science has scattered from her apron richer treasures and more wondrous products than fancy ever dramed of in the cornucopia of Fortune. We have all read of the sweet-singing canary that pined away and died because the mocking-bird, by imitative strains, excelled its native melody; even so it would seem as if Imagination drooped in despair at the rivalry of. Science, which, like the rod of Moses, has swallowed up the incantations with which once it charmed the nations. If Puck, in a "Midsummer's Night Dream" of Shakspeare's dreaming, could only promise impatient Oberon to

Put a girdle round about the earth In forty minutes,

our Morse would now contract to "do the job" in less time than the glibbest tongue could abbreviate that synonym for quickness, the name of Mr. Robin-son, called Jack "for short." To show the old pa-triarch "in the land of Uz" the imbecility of human power in his day, the question was put to him. midst of a world that would be visionary if it were not real; amidst things as strange, says Macaulay, as any that are described in the "Arabian Tales," or in those romances on which the curate and the barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an auto-da-fe; amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin; fountains more wonderful than the golden water of Parizade; conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero; arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo; remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras. Thus has it come to pass that fact has outstripped fancy, and Imagination, tired of the race, contents herself with picking up the golden balls that Science has dropped by the way as she presses onwards and still onwards.

If the scientific wonders of a Watt, an Arkwright, a Fulton, and a Morse have thus transcended the enchantments of a Merlin and a Michael Scott, or the wildest imaginings of later romance, why, it may be asked, cannot the miracles of science afford the desired pabulum for the nurture and invigoration of the imagination? Simply for the reason, we reply, that these miracles soon cease to be miraculous. They are the wonders of a day, and from their very nature lack that essential element of mystery in which the poetic fancy delights to embathe itself. There is nothing occult in the products of science; so that, while they strike the imagination by their grandeur and their beauty, they yet leave it no room in which to play. Every thing is fixed, determinate, and patent; so that, after all, it is the practical reason which science has expanded until it has overlapped what was before deemed the peculiar province and domain of the "vision and the faculty divine." It is the task of imagination to body forth the form of things unknown;" it is the task of science to leave nothing unknown that is knowable : the one acts most powerfully in the twilight of civilization, the other in its full mid-day beam; the one is conversant with the ideal, the other with the real; the one moves in a sphere above this "terrene dustbin," the other glories to be a child of the earth and a vassal of man.

Thus, while this age of power-looms, magnetic telegraphs, and portable manures has its marvels, they are such as appeal but slightly to the poetic element of our nature. Do we regret for this reason the march of Science? Doubtless we should not; but the question again rises, what shall we do with the Imagination? Shall we ignore its existence? Is it destined to fade away into the "pure reason," like the glistering gossamers of the night before the light of day? Is it a faculty given us to be cultivated or to be neglected? As for ourselves. believing it as we do the main-spring of our intellectual activity, we cannot contemplate without regret the decay of each hoary usage, which, while it kept alive the traditions of a common ancestry, was manna on which imagination fed. What with the increasing oblivion of our ancestral myths, the hothouse germination of the reason by the schools, the diffusion of a "knowledge which seals and a science which dries up the wells of poetic inspiration, we may justly fear lest the imagination may become extinct in our children. Would it not be better and safer to imitate in part the prudence of the Dervise of Balsora, in the Arabian Tale, who did not hesitate to abandon to others "the camels with their load of jewels and gold, while he retained the casket of that mysterious juice which enabled him to behold at one glance all the hidden riches of the universe?" Even such a casket is the Mind, and that mysterious juice the Imagination.

DEBATE IN THE SENATE

TRIPARTITE CUBAN CONVENTION.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1852. Mr. MASON offered the following resolution, which was read :

Resolved, That the President of the United States comm Resourced, That the President of the United States commu-nicate to the Senate, if in his opinion not incompatible with the public interest, copies of the "official notes received from the Ministers of France and England, inviting the Govern-ment of the United States to become a party with Great Briment of the United States to become a party with Great Britain and France to a tripartite convention, in virtue of which the three Powers should severally and collectively disclaim, now and for the future, all intention to obtain possession of the Island of Cuba, and should bind themselvee to discountenance all attempts to that effect on the part of every Power or individual whatever;" and of the reply thereto on the part of this Government, referred to in his annual message to the two Houses of Congress on the 6th instant.

Mr. Mason. Mr. President, the subject in regard which this resolution calls for information is brought to our notice in the annual message of the President to both Houses of Congress at the commencement of this session. The President brings to our notice the invitation which was received from the Ministers of England and France in reference to the Island of Cuba. The language of the message in regard to that is quoted in the resolution just read; but I will read the sentence which follows:

"This invitation has been respectfully declined, for reason which it would occupy too much space in this communication to state in detail, but which led me to think that the proposed measure would be of doubtful constitutionality, impolitic,

and unavailing."

So much of the message is purely narrative—giving to So much of the message is purely narrative—giving to Congress information as to the fact. The residue of the paragraph, however, expresses the judgment of the President upon the subject-matter, and I will read it:

"I have, however, in common with several of my predecessors, directed the Ministers of France and England to be assured that the United States entertain no designs against Cuba, but that, on the contrary, I should regard its incorposition into the Union at the present time as fearable, with

Mr. President, if any further evidence were necessary to satisfy this country that the eyes of the two great maritime and commercial Powers of Europe have been directed, with increasing interest, to the relations borne by the continent of North America to the Island of Cuba, t would be furnished by the fact disclosed in the message, to which this resolution refers. The position which the Island of Cuba geographically holds to this continent is Island of Cuba geographically holds to this continent is such, that almost ever since we became a nation it has been looked upon with the deepest interest by all our statesmen. The Island of Cuba lies in the gateway of the Gulf of Mexico; and all our statesmen, of every political complexion, from the foundation of the Government to this day, were admonished thereby that the vigilance of this country must never be relaxed in regard to the political relations of that Island.

But there is something more, I apprehend, which has led these two great European Powers to make to this country a proposition which they should have known when they made it would be declined. They should have known that, sir; because the whole history of the political action of this country would forbid the acceptance

of such an invitation; but they have made it, and we are informed by the President that it has been declined. Sir, the reasons for making it under the circumstances suggested require no seer's gift to comprehend. It has been the established policy of this country, made known in the most open, frank, and undisguised manner to all the Powers of Europe, that while the Island of Cuba remained a province, a dependency of Spain, we should never interfere with it; but at if ever any ambitious or grasping potentate should attempt, either by rapine or by treaty, to take the Island of Cuba from the possession of Spain, it would become this country, cost what it might, to interpose and to prevent it. Every country in Europe knows that. What, then, has led to this invitation, jointly extended by the two great powerful maritime nations of Europe at this time? Mr. President, I can trace it to but one cause—a belief on the part of those Governments that there is a tendency in the popular mind in this country to take Cuba, and the invitation was intended as an intimation that France and England were n alliance to prevent it.

Now, sir, I am here free to declare, representing as I

do a section of the country as deeply interested in the future relations of Cuba to this continent as any other; in my place as a Senator from the South, and upon my responsibility as a statesman of America, that I am content Cuba shall remain in the possession of Spain, unless it can be acquired from her by voluntary cession on her part, or unless the people of Cuba, by their own act, shall sever all political connexion with their European mother, and voluntarily represent a proposed to the context of t

sever all political connexion with their European mother, and voluntarily propose annexation.

Sir, the honor, the dignity, the good name of America, for all time to come, demands at the hands of the Ameri-can people, not only that they should not sympathize with or encourage, but that they should indignantly frown upon and suppress any attempts, by violence in any form, to wrest from Spain any part of her possessions—whether they be stimulated by political ambition or by a spirit of speculative marauding on the part of those who engage

The policy of this country, as I have said, has been announced to all Europe. Spain is a weak Power, and with the continent of Europe she is so. perty, as fully, exclusively, and entirely her property as Oregon or New Mexico is ours, and any attempt, whether made by individuals, in violation of the laws of their country, or made by the Government in its politic capacity, to dismember Cuba from Spain, would tarnish, for ever tarnish, our national fame.

Sir, I know of no safer guaranty for our own rights, our national rights, and the rights of the States in their overeign capacity, than a uniform and scrupulous regard to the rights of others. But, Mr. President, the invitaon thus given by those two Powers, acting jointly, prooosing on their part a tripartite convention of the three Sovernments, to disclaim, now and forever hereafter, any urpose of acquiring Cuba, by any means, imports a more I should read its meaning thus: France and England believe that the possession of Cuba by the United States would be fraught with consequences injurious to them, and therefore they give us to understand, by this form of communication, that they are in league to prevent it. eady indicated our policy to let Cuba alone, and sacredly to regard the rights of Spain. We know that in the full-ness of time the fruit will ripen, and fall from the parent stem. When that time shall come its political coalition with this continent is inevitable. Interference by other nations may hasten this event, but the combined power of

Europe cannot prevent it.

This, sir, is a full, and I think an intelligible, reply to ny question of European interference with the political dition of Cubs. Sir, who can doubt but that the acquisition of Cuba by

the United States is a question of time only—purely a question of time? In the progress of empires, in the formation of nations, they grow from infancy to youth, and so to manhood. Great and powerful as our country is, it is yet in its youth; and it is of little moment to us whether we acquire Cuba in this generation or in the next: but come it will, just as certainly as that the world revolves

Mr. President, I regretted, deeply regretted, to see just before we were assembled here at the present session, that the President of the United States had thought sion, that the President of the United States had thought it proper, upon a general call for the correspondence by the other House, to divulge all communications which had passed between this Government and Spain, on the subject of Cuba, from its first commencement. I do not mean to question the motives of the President in so doing, but I do question his judgment. Whatever it was intended to effect, one consequence must be the result, the post-ponement of the acquisition of the Island to a more distant period than if the correspondence had not been divulged; and I apprehend that it is not very unusual in the diplomatic intersourse of nations to bring from the the diplomatic intersourse of nations to bring from the secret archives, where they properly belong, matters that have confidentially passed between two Governments, on any question in which others hold themselves to be interested. The Administration which has published the correspondence is about to go out of office. I shall make no war upon it for what it has done; but I will say that, as war upon it for what it has done; but I will say that, as far as the acquisition of Cuba is involved, it has done little to expedite it by divulging that correspondence. Yet the publication may have the less injurious effect for the reason that our Government deals but little in secret diplomacy. The ends and objects we desire to attain should not be idly or uselessly promulged; but if they become so I apprehend the world will find nothing in them at which we have cause to blush. Let them have the information for what it is worth. They all keep I the information for what it is worth. They all know—I mean the European Powers all know—not only the deep interest our whole country feels in the acquisition of that Island, but they know, also, that it will inevitably be-come ours at some day. Let them have the information for what it is worth. It may postpone the acquisition; it cannot prevent it.

I tell you, sir, what will expedite the annexation more than any thing else—preserving towards the Government of Spain perfect good faith, requiring of our citizens an obedience to the laws in refraining from rapine towards foreigners, as they are required to do towards each other. Let Spain repose in the consciousness that, however de-sirable to us Cuba may be, all that we demand of her is that she shall keep it, and not part with it; and rely upon it, in the fullness of time, and before very long, even Spain will yield to the inevitable necessity which governs the events of the world. The geographical position of Cuba, with the increasing growth of this country, will determine all the rest.

I have said that in so much of the President's message

I regret, sir, that the President deemed it necessary to express that as the opinion of the Executive; nor need I suggest to the Senate upon what that opinion is founded; it speaks for itself. But I am free to declare, as one of the representatives of the States, that I know of no peril which should ensue, or which should cause us to hesitate, if Cuba were ready for annexation to-morrow. But let this opinion of the President pass for what it is worth.

In the present attitude of the affair in hand, to discuss it could lead to no practical result, but I could not dismiss it except under protest.

to discharge its duties satisfactorily to the Senate and honorably to the country and disposed equally to avoid rashness and pusillanimity.

We cannot disguise from ourselves that there never was a period in our history fraught with more momentious subjects connected with our relations with the Powers of the earth, and liable to present themselves from hour to hour for practical consideration. We have heard a great deal about our manifest destiny, and the term has been equally assailed by reproach and by ridicule. Now, sir, if by that phrase it is meant, as I suppose it is, that the great characteristic features of the age are to produce an influence, a decisive one, upon our course and policy, then I believe we have a manifest destiny from which we cannot escape, and it is a destiny by which we shall advance in all the elements of knowledge and prosperity, intellectually and materially. As to fixed immoperity, intellectually and materially. As to fixed immobility, we may talk about it as we would about an ante-diluvian speculation, but while we stop to talk the world of progress is moving on, and we must redouble our pace to overtake it. We cannot isolate ourselves from the other nations of the earth, and we have rights and interests connected with them which demand our constant, and often our jealous, attention. Mr Canning said truly and emphatically, "We must keep on the line of political knowledge." When one cheek is struck, in national affairs, if we turn the other we shall soon have neither cheek, nor head, nor body to enable us to repeat the movement. And it was in this spirit I desired last year, when the occasion called for it, to repudiate by a solemn public act an interpolation made in the law of nations by the Emperor of Russia, striking at the very root of

But it was opposed and defeated, and I see that the President in his recent annual message recalls some of the adverse views then presented, and expresses his approbation of them. Sir, I regret this course, because I have a high personal regard for the President, and approve-much he has done; but I must be permitted to say that the action proposed by myself and others upon this that the action proposed by myself and others upon this matter was no more calculated to produce war than the exercise of any other unquestionable national right. I think the charge does injustice to those with whom I acted. We all disclaimed the remotest intention of provoking war, and maintained, both by reason and authority, that the expression of a national opinion upon a great question of public right, was as much the prerogative of a republic as of a monarchy, and that such a proceeding gave no cause of offence, no more than the enunciation of

ed with patriotic horror. With whom we were to form otic Americans. an alliance, by declaring a principle of public law, no one has told us, and it is yet a discovery which is to reward has told us, and it is yet a discovery which is to reward views to disclose. It is pretty well known that I have a some future historian. However, the object was gained. We were humbugged, or we humbugged ourselves. But we fess that I can wait awhile patiently, if necessary, and shall come to it. President says, and I already see that it has told upon this question: for that very respectable body, the Whig convention of New York, has pronounced its adhesion to which I heartily approve:

"3d. As to foreign policy. Peace evermore, so far as is consistent with the due assertion of our rights, a careful avoidance of all entangling alliances with foreign Powers, but a solemn protest against any deliberate defiance of the laws of nations protest against any deliberate definee of the laws of nations for the furtherance of the interests of despotism, and a generous and active sympathy with, and moral support to, all oppressed nations and races, struggling to assert or retain their liberties."

And we shall not only come up to this good work of participation in the public law of the world, but we shall also adopt the policy advocated by Mr. Monroe and Mr. Polk, that no European nation shall be permitted to colonize hereafter any part of this continent. Not to maintain existing colonies, as the English papers impudently and falsely asserted, and as many timid persons in this country made themselves believe; for both of those statesmen expressly excluded such a pretension, leaving untouched existing rights, but they sought to prevent the subjugation to a colonial state of any of the new Governments which had assumed and established their independence. But we were also twice frightened out of this measure. "We could not get on the line of political knowledge." But "raw-head and bloody bones" will not be scare-crows for us. Manifest destiny is doing its part; and we shall, ere long, be found warm and efficient sup-

porters of those two great articles of political faith, pe-culiarly ours by position and institutions.

The foundation of this claim of exemption rests upon pe-culiar considerations, which are not less just than they are forcible. The law of nations is not a rigid, inflexible code, but it accommodates itself to the varying condition of the world, and history is filled with proofs of this powof the world, and history is filled with proofs of this power of adaptation to existing circumstances. This hemisphere, besides its general relation to the older continent, has peculiar interests of its own, which demand its vigilant protection. Settled first with a view to commerce, and then held as the means of power and wealth, the various portions of it were colonized by European Powers, and were involved in the wars of Europe without the slightest interest in their origin or objects. However frivolous the cause of war, whether social, or political, or dynastic, or personal, it immediately crossed the Atlantic and extended its ravages to countries which ought to have been beyond the sphere of its operations. When we had been beyond the sphere of its operations. When we had had time to recover from the exhaustion of our revolutionary efforts, and from the weakness of a new political orary efforts, and from the weakness of a new political organization, this subject came up for consideration; and it was obvious that the crisis demanded some powerful action, or that we might always be placed in the midst of belligerent operations whenever hostilities broke out in Europe. This was a state of things not to be suffered; and as soon, therefore, as the Spanish colonies threw off the yoke of the mother country, and assumed independent positions, it was equally our right and our interest to preserve them from resubjugation and recolonization. Such is the condition of this question: and appearances indicate that we may be called upon ere long to interpose efficaciously in support of this great principle of American exemption. I cannot believe that the French Government is endeavoring to obtain possession of any portion of the Mexican territories; but if such be the object, I trust the effort will be met and resisted by the whole power of our country; and I think the sooner our Government openly avows this determination, in this and all similar cases, the better will it be for our permanent interest and honor.

In this connexion, sir, I desire to submit a few brief remarks concerning Cuba, as that island presents one of the most difficult questions, perhaps the most difficult, in our foreign policy. Five years ago, in some observations I submitted to the Senate, on the subject of the application of the Yucatese people for the aid of this Government against the overwhelming force of the Indians, I had occasion to explain my views in relation to Cuba, and I have since seen no cause to change them. I then said:

I have said that in so much of the President's message as I have read was contained a narrative only of the fact that he announced. In the concluding sentence of that paragraph, the President expresses an opinion. He says:

"I have, however, in common with several of my prodecessors, directed the Ministers of France and England to be assured that the United States entertain no designs against Cuba."

In the expression of that opinion I fully agree with the President; we entertain no designs against Cuba. But he continues:

"But that, on the contrary, I should regard its incorporation into the Union at the present time as fraught with serious peril."

I regret, sir, that the President deemed it necessary to express that as the opinion of the Executive; nor need I suggest to the Senate upon what that opinion is founded; it seems for itself. But I am france to declare as no of "Self-defe nee is an incident to communities as to individ-

or regret, sir, that the President deemed it necessary to express that as the opinion of the Executive; nor need I suggest to the Senate upon what that opinion is founded; it speaks for itself. But I am free to declare, as one of the representatives of the States, that I know of no perli which should ensue, or which should cause us to hesitate, if Ouba were ready for annexation to-morrow. But let this opinion of the President pass for what it is worth.

In the present attitude of the affair in hand, to discuss it could lead to no practical result, but I could not dismiss it except under protest.

Mr. President, in making these remarks to the Senate upon offering this resolution, I intended to do no more than express my opinion as an American Senator upon the relations that exist between this country and Spain in reference to Cuba, and to express further what I hold to be the duty of every department of this Government, and of every American citizen, to recognise Cuba as the property of Spain, and as such to recognise also the muniments with which civilization protects all property. Cuba belongs to Spain; it does not belong to us, and none but profane hands can be laid upon it, unless, through some act of Spain herself, forbearance on our part would involve the safety of our own people. And I wish further to declare, in reference to the proposition made by those two Powers of Europe—letti have what meaning it may—that whenever the hour comes, when in good faith, and with due regard to national honor, we can incorporate thas just heard from the honorable chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, and we may well congratulate on the states of the states and pusillanimity.

We cannot disguise from ourselves that there never was a period in our history fraught with more moment to ous subjects connected with our relations with the Power was a period in our history fraught with more moment on subjects connected with our relations with the Power was a period in our history fraught with more moment on subjects conn

mense American possessions. We are near and powerful; and, besides, the condition of the island has been critical and uncertain. There are questions of internal police there and uncertain. There are questions of internal police there which possess paramount importance, and they are precisely questions which would awaken the vigilance of any people on earth. And Cuba has been in a state of quasi revolution, the Government fearing external collision as well as internal explosions. And there is not a nation which would not adopt very strong measures for its security under such circumstances. We should, and persist in them too, at all hazards. This is precisely a state of things when extreme points of rights should not be unnecessarily as the contract of the things when extreme points of rights should not be unnecessarily pushed by a foreign Power; and I saw with regret that an effort was making to bring matters to a crisis, by insisting upon the introduction of a person supposed by the Government of the island—wrongly, indeed, as it subsequently appeared—to be dangerous. And I com-mend the course of our Administration in this affair. One of our citizens, however, seemed to think it his duty to interfere, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, almost to provoke a collision. I consider his conduct equally preprovoke a collision. I consider his conduct equally presumptuous and unpatriotic. It could have been to him a comparative unimportant point whether A or B was the purser of his ship, certainly not a point worth the consequences possible and even probable. And as to the principle of exclusion, that was a question for the Government, and I think the Government was right in the view it took of it. The honor of the country, thank God, was not in the keeping of Mr. Law. It was in better hands.

Now, sir, I desire the possession of Cuba principally as a military position, with a view to its vast importance as the true key to the Mississippi. But as a mere question of acquisition, the subject presents no terrors to me. I observe the President views it differently, and urges strong objections to the measure, to the general principle, in-

objections to the measure, to the general principle, in-deed, of the extension of our territory. And there is a striking coincidence between some of his suggestions and striking coincidence between some of his suggestions and some of the reasons presented against the purchase of Louisiana, when that question was before Congress. Time and experience have come to put the seal of approbation upon that great measure, and to refute the anticipations of evil so confidently indulged and expressed. The inhabitants of French birth or descent are as truly attached to this Union as any other citizens of our country, and a republic as of a monarchy, and that such a proceeding gave no cause of offence, no more than the enunciation of great principles in our Declaration of Independence, but that it put the dissent on record, leaving the Government proclaiming it uncommitted by the declaration, and free to adopt its own course at any time thereafter. I know of no public man—no private one, indeed—who dreamed of accompanying or following the declaration with actual hostilities. But we were frightened, if not out of our propriety. at least out of our true duty and dignity. The wonderful discovery was made that Washington and Jefferson had warned us of the danger of "en-tangling alliances," and that this proceeding would be increased activity of business, would ere long do their tangling alliances," and that this proceeding would be increased activity of business, would ere long do their an "entangling alliance," and was therefore to be avoid- work, and convert the population into zealous and patri-

convention of New York, has pronounced its adhesion to the doctrine in the following resolution, every word of from the measure. And we cannot employ this interval from the measure. And we cannot employ this interval of waiting better than by the adoption of wise and efficient means to bind our recent acquisitions to the rest of the Confederacy by the ties of interest as well as of affection. And it is my decided conviction that one of the most important measures—the most important, indeed, for this Government—is the construction, so far as our constitutional authority, permits, of a railroad from some point upon the Mississippi, for it is perfectly indifferent to me where it is, and I trust the friends of this great object will not fritter away their strength by mere ferent to me where it is, and I trust the friends of this great object will not fritter away their strength by mere local questions of direction and determination. Let those matters be settled by commissioners, or in some other practical manner, but let us lend our undivided force to the great work itself. When completed, as it is sure to be, it will bind this great Republic together literally by bonds of iron, and by the still stronger bonds of confidence and interest, and San Francisco will be practically nearer the seat of the Government than Sayannah was at the adorseat of the Government than Savannah was at the adoption of the constitution.

As to the general subject of annexation, I have no new

seat of the Government than Savannah was at the adoption of the constitution.

We are often asked by the timid and the cautious, where is annexation to stop? That question will not be answered in my day, and I leave its solution to those upon whom may devolve the duty and the responsibility of deciding it. A General Government to conduct external relations with foreign Powers, and to regulate the interior relations of the members of the Union; and State Governments, to provide for the great objects of freedom and security, and for the various political wants of the community, this American scheme of political organization opens a wide field for its operations; indeed, an almost boundless one. It is certainly far easier to preserve amicable relations between neighboring States acknowledging a federal head, with the necessary provision for the peaceable adjustment of difficulties, than it would be ta preserve peace amongst them if independent, when force and not reason must be the arbiter of their disputes.

But I repeat, sir, that I denounce any acquisition but an honest one. And we can look back with gratifying pride to the course we have pursued upon this subject, and safely challenge comparison with that of any other nation, and especially of that nation which, in the spirit of the Pharisee, arrogates to itself the crown of self-righteousness above all the other people of the earth. We have made four acquisitions, two by peaceable purchase, one by voluntary annexation, and the fourth by conquest, in a just war, and by the payment of a vast sum of money, after giving up a large portion of the enemy's country which was in our possession. And when did England.

sword? And yet such is the inconsistency of human nature that she is ever vaunting her own moderation, and arraigning our rapacity. John Bull belongs to a curious species of the genus homo. He cannot discover the beam in his own eye, but can look across the ocean, three thousand miles off, and discover the mote in Jonathan's eye, and then announce it with self-gratulation to the eye, and then announce it with self-gratulation to the world. Our wicked propensity for acquisitions has been with England a favorite theme of reproof and reproach, and very lately we have had some beautiful specimens of this spirit in the London papers. The Britannia says that "American diplomacy requires only to be known to be theroughly despised." "American diplomacy and American duplicity are first cousins." "There is but one principle in American diplomacy—gain." The London Sun, speaking of our course, remarks that "Whenever the wolf wants a colorable pretext for injustice, he can readily find or make it." The London Chronicle is not a whit behind its co-laborers in this agreeable work of national abuse. It says, "Such is the state of the case which illustrates the grasping character of the universal Yankee nation."

versal Yankee nation."

The very last advices from Eastern Asia have brought us a striking commentary upon these aspersions, and upon English moderation and disinterestedness. Another of the native Powers of Hindostan has fallen before the